

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR

# PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

DECEMBER 1958

VOL. 39 No. 698

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JOURNAL  
of the  
Society for Psychical Research  
VOLUME 39 No. 698 DECEMBER 1958

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OUR PIONEERS

III

WILLIAM JAMES

BY GARDNER MURPHY

WILLIAM JAMES, the elder brother of Henry James the Anglo-American novelist was born in 1842. His academic career began with the study of the biological and medical sciences, as assistant professor of physiology at Harvard. He was then appointed to a chair of psychology in the same University and devoted himself largely to that subject for more than twenty years. His great book the *Principles of Psychology* appeared in 1890 and secured for him a world-wide reputation as the greatest psychologist of his age. From that time onwards his productive activity turned more and more towards the problems of philosophy and since 1902, when he became professor of philosophy, it was devoted almost wholly to those problems. His active interest in psychical research extended through the last thirty years of his life and was not something apart from his main activities; rather it was for him an integral part of the whole.

He was a Corresponding Member of the S.P.R. from 1884-9, a Vice-President from 1890-1910 and President during the years 1894-5. His essay *What Psychical Research has Accomplished* must be regarded as the most powerful and convincing of all apologies for the work of this Society. *The Varieties of Religious Experience* came in 1902. He expounded his pragmatic approach in *Pragmatism: a New Name for some old Ways of Thinking* (1907) and the *Meaning of Truth* (1909). He died in the month of August 1910.

William James did four important things for psychical research. First, he gave it a certain status, a certain intellectual respectability,



which only his own immense prestige could have given it in the United States, in the era in which he flourished. Secondly, he played a major role in founding official psychical research in the United States, keeping it, properly, very close indeed to the S.P.R. of London, but in an administratively independent place which helped pave the way for a later fully independent American S.P.R. Third, he discovered the extraordinary mediumistic powers of Mrs L. E. Piper, who was, one might well say, the major research instrument of psychical research from the middle 80's until the end of the century, and continued for another decade into the twentieth century as one of the major sources of information regarding those paranormal processes which are related to the issue of communication from the deceased. Fourth, he presented a 'radical empiricism' regarding the position which a serious facing of facts must assume when what seem to be unassimilable data must somehow be faced, thought through and correlated.

James's restless and ruthless search for facts, or even more broadly, his search for new experience, appears as a reflection of his father—a 'seeker' who, among the sprawling complexities of American religious innovations in the nineteenth century, could never find an intellectual home. It reflects also the pioneer openness and ruggedness of spirit so characteristic of American thought in the era. It reflects the mottled texture of James's efforts in France, Switzerland, Germany, and Britain, to achieve through painting, through medicine, through science, and through philosophy—a sort of conglomerate of experience from which he could ultimately make a life perspective for himself. And it reflects that deeply personal nervousness which showed itself repeatedly in huge physical discomforts and illnesses from which he at times thought he had saved himself in a new philosophy of life, but which again and again upset his equanimity and forced upon him new efforts at serenity and personal poise.

In and through all this turbulence, James was identified intensely with the new spirit of science as represented by the evolutionary outlook on the one hand and the laboratory studies of physiology on the other. When he was asked by President Eliot of Harvard to teach undergraduate students the rudiments of physiology, he used this as an entering wedge for the development of a psychological laboratory; later a department of psychology; later still an effort at the understanding of man in which no barrier between psychology and philosophy can be discovered. Philosophy, however, did not mean a divine detachment from human affairs. It meant the grubbiest concern with particular details, findable facts, verifiable working principles. The only person not at home in

such a laboratory approach is he who has an utterly systematic scientific outlook, with no ghosts, no skeletons in cupboards, no strange and deviant phenomena, demanding to be examined. Every one soon knew that when James took a subject seriously there was something there worthy of a vigorous and inquiring mind. Psychical research received this endorsement with a tremendous push.

Specifically, he responded with eager sympathy to the organization of the S.P.R. in 1882 by the Cambridge group to which we owe so much, and helped to persuade the American astronomer Simon Newcomb to assume the presidency of an American Society for the same purpose. He remained spiritually and personally close to both the British and the American groups—and especially to Frederic W. H. Myers.

In this setting, it is utterly natural and credible that William James should grasp the religious as well as the scientific challenge. Just as he offered a listening ear to many a new religious movement, so he responded to that extraordinary cult, the use of human mediators between the deceased and the living, which was so dramatically represented in the professional mediums, resident or itinerant, known to every large American community.

He had, moreover, the extraordinary fortune to discover, in the early 80's a young woman who, in deep trance, became the vehicle for utterances relating to members of his own and his wife's family, which he was soon convinced could not possibly have been acquired by her in any normal way. The bare fact of telepathy was the minimum which an honest mind had to accept. Almost simultaneously then, three major steps mentioned above were bound to be taken: i.e. public assertion of the intellectual respectability of belief in at least this much of the world of the paranormal; acceptance of the administrative task of helping to organize a formal effort in psychical research; emphasis on the major importance of the availability of Mrs Piper for research investigation.

But what did the phenomena *mean* to James? For James, of course, the gap between the paranormal and the normal psychology of the day was less immense than it must have appeared to most of his contemporaries, because he had himself given such deep and sustained thought to problems of double personality (as in the Ansel Bourne case which he himself investigated), and of strange healings—realities so personal for him that he made his way to the Boston Statehouse in the interests of getting a fair hearing for 'unorthodox' healers.

As, with the turn of the century, he moved into his sixties and



the last decade of his life, his thought was evidently more and more concerned with the empirical realities of religious experiences, in which the concept of a 'window' into the unknown bound together for him the sense of unutterable revelation and some aspects of the world of paranormal sensitivity. The term religion however, had for James the same rugged empirical meaning that the terms philosophy and science conveyed. Religion was not an 'easy escape'. It was a tough world calling for analysis in terms of empirical realities. In this decade his volume on *A Pluralistic Universe* reminded us that the world does not necessarily hang together in tightly jointed architectural fashion, but may be composed of somewhat disparate parts; while a year or two later, in his lectures on *Pragmatism*, he was struggling to show that the philosopher's reality can never get far from the kind of truth that is directly testable in human living.

These are fundamental background components if one is to understand James's own most extensive empirical study in psychical research, namely his 'Report on Mrs Piper's Hodgson Control'. In this study he recounts and analyses a series of sittings, his own and those of other sitters, in which the spirit of Richard Hodgson, shortly after his death late in 1905, purported to communicate through Mrs Piper. Since Hodgson, of course, had been very well known to psychical research and to Mrs Piper personally, the problem of evidential communication regarding his continued existence beyond death was an extraordinarily difficult one. Let us hasten to add that the Hodgson control is by no means one of the strongest in terms of evidence for survival; there is not a great deal of first-class material, and there is a great deal of sheer talking which the living Hodgson would certainly not have taken seriously as survival evidence.

James feels his way to the position that it is not essentially the mass of evidential material, but something about the exquisite rendering of the personal quality of the Hodgson individuality, as it deals gently with certain Hodgson memories, that constitutes the best evidence of its survival. James was groping toward the view expressed by many since his time, that there is something about the style or personality modulation that properly carries its own conviction, as in our recognizing a voice over the telephone or in recognizing the style of a master in the arts when sheer analysis of content or structure must fail. In view of the unknown riches of histrionic skill which a medium like Mrs Piper may have been able to command, this argument does not carry today the weight which James attached to it fifty years ago. But it is of interest to see that James was willing to go so far as to accord the

Hodgson control a significant place among the factors inclining him to consider seriously the belief in survival. He tells us, in the end, that he is convinced that he had either been talking with Richard Hodgson or with a 'spirit counterfeit' of him—that is, some other spiritual entity passing itself off as Richard Hodgson. Although this is a very psychological study, a study that a professional psychologist is gratified to make, it is not, in my judgment, the highest type of psychical research of that period or of the present.

But, I believe that the highest contribution which James was able to give to psychical research was a disciplined, unfearing, ever inquiring, nervously revolving and reconsidering mind. I will choose as documentation of this point James's review of Frederic W. H. Myers's *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (Longmans, 1903, two volumes), the fruit of twenty years' profound study, investigation and reflection which Myers and his group had given to the subject since the founding of the S.P.R. in 1882. James, as a frequent visitor to Britain and devoted admirer of Frederic Myers's amazing sensitivity, scholarship, creativeness, and courage, was eager to hail this work as a crowning achievement properly marking the culmination of its author's extraordinary life. Yet even in this moment of warmth and pathos, reminding one of Shelley's greeting to Keats upon his death, James cannot quite give up the empiricist's bitter task of criticism, reserve, caution: '*But is it really so?*' Flying with Myers through the vast spaces in which the immortal soul roams as it did in the orphic mysteries and in the world of Dante and Blake, James has to ask the impertinent question: But do all the evidences of psychopathology, dissociation, double personality, the evidence of the weak, the sick, the frightened, the undisciplined, the savage, that you find in the deeper strata of the mind, really turn out, my dear friend, to come from the same region in which the sublime, the ecstatic, the potentially immortal reside? Can we really accept psychopathology on the same dish, so to speak, with the glowing message of those extraordinary last pages in Myers's book, entitled *Trance, Possession, and Ecstasy*? It is as if James, like Icarus, tried to fly but got nearer to the sun than any empiricist can safely allow himself and fell back to earth.

But after all, the empiricist's fate can be a magnificent one if he is allowed to define it in his own terms; that is, if he is allowed to wander in all meadows and over all mountain tops; if he is a seeker who never really expects either final discovery or final peace. It was this restlessness to which William James was wedded, and it is this view, as a modern intellectual's approach to



psychical research, with which he must be identified permanently in his role as a pioneer in our field of study.

## TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE ISSUES WITH REGARD TO SURVIVAL BE RECONCILED?

BY HORNELL HART

ON 8 September 1958 Professor Hornell Hart addressed the members of the Society on the above question. On returning to America he kindly left behind the script of his paper from which the following condensed extracts have been made.

Those who have made studies of the survival question may be grouped into a five-fold classification :

<i>Fanatically Convinced Believers in Survival</i>	<i>Three Groups Who Abide by the Rules of Science</i>			<i>Fanatically Convinced Anti-Sur- vivalists</i>
	<i>Factual In- vestigators Who Accept Survival</i>	<i>Agnostics</i>	<i>Factual In- vestigators Who Reject Survival</i>	

In our present discussion we shall exclude both the fanatical believers and the fanatical disbelievers and concentrate on the findings of the three groups who have given reasonable evidence of their loyalty to the ideal of dispassionate fact-seeking. To illustrate these three central groups we may cite the following examples :

1. Factual investigators who accept survival : Sir Oliver Lodge and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.
2. Professed agnostics : Professor Gardner Murphy (see his three papers *An Outline of Survival Evidence*, *Difficulties Confronting the Survival Hypothesis*, and *Field Theory and Survival*, A.S.P.R., 1945), Professor J. B. Rhine (see particularly his *Science looks at Life after Death*, American Weekly, 8 Dec. 1957).
3. Factual investigators who reject survival : Professor E. R. Dodds (see *Why I Do Not Believe in Survival*, *Proc. S.P.R.* 42, 1934, 147-72), Professor Charles Richet (*Thirty Years of Psychical Research*, London, 1923).



There are three outstanding issues :

1. Do mediumistic communications ever originate in surviving intelligences?
2. Are apparitions of the dead ever vehicles through which consciously surviving personalities communicate?
3. Can conscious personalities ever observe and act, apart from any physical brain?

The present paper can only deal with the first of these three issues.

## I. MEDIUMISTIC EVIDENCE FAVOURABLE TO SURVIVAL

Various competent investigators have reported communication with the dead. Four examples may be cited :

The first of these is the case of George Pelham, who, for the six years following his death in 1892, purportedly communicated through Mrs Piper. Richard Hodgson, who followed the case closely, felt that, through the course of the years, the manifestations of this communicator behaved like a continuous, living and persistent personality, and whatever change was observable was not of disintegration, but rather of integration and evolution (*A Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance*, *Proc. S.P.R.* 8, 1892, 1-167 ; idem 13, 1897-8, 284-582).

The second outstanding example is the case of Hugh Talbot who purportedly, after his death, in a sitting of his wife's with Mrs Leonard, described a notebook of his, which she had not, up to that time, opened. Specific and unusual information was communicated (Mrs Henry Sedgwick, *An Examination of Book Tests*, *Proc. S.P.R.* 31, 1921, 253-60).

The third case involves the technical information about the disaster to the airship R-101, which was transmitted through Mrs Garrett, three days after the crash, purportedly from the dead captain (James Leasor, *The Millionth Chance*, London, 1957).

The fourth case is that of the deceased son of Mr Lionel G. Aitken, in which there appears persuasive evidence that the surviving spirit of the son took steps to bring about a proxy sitting with Mrs Leonard through which the father received highly evidential communications (Drayton Thomas, *A New Type of Proxy Case*, *Journ. A.S.P.R.*, 31, 1939, 103-4, 120-2).

In addition to such individual cases the thirty-three years of sittings which Drayton Thomas had with Mrs Leonard provides a second body of mediumistic evidence (Id, *A New Hypothesis Concerning Trance Communications*, *Proc. S.P.R.* 48, 1947, 121-163 ; see also his earlier writings). That human personalities do

survive bodily death was the conviction for which Mr Thomas believed he found ample justification in his third-of-a-century of systematic research. By survival he meant continuity of memory, of character, and of basic interests. He believed that surviving personalities retain vivid and detailed memories of their earth-lives, and that they retain their basic attitudes and character traits.

Cross-correspondences provide a third body of evidence. One of the best epitomies of such material is given by Gardner Murphy, *Triumphs and Defeats in the Study of Mediumship*, *Journ. A.S.P.R.* 51, 1957, 125-35.

In my judgment, if we put aside the very dramatic evidence of survival coming from spontaneous cases, such as apparitions and dreams which give highly personalized information not easily attributable to any living source, the strongest survival evidence would appear to come from those mediumistic communications in which the message could not very well have been devised by any single person living or deceased, but in which two individuals after their death have compared notes on their life interest and have given through one or more mediums a message which represents a sort of compound or integrated shared bundle of information representing the two personalities. This is exactly what was reported by Gerald Balfour in the celebrated case, *The Ear of Dionysius*, in which Dr A. W. Verrall and Professor Henry Butcher, classical scholars, are represented as meeting after their deaths, contriving a message intimately conveying the personalities of the two, delivered through the automatic script of Mrs Willett and later deciphered and published by Balfour (1918).

## II. SOME MAJOR ADVERSE EVIDENCE

Mrs Henry Sidgwick published in 1915 what is probably the most thorough and competent analysis of Mrs Piper's mediumship. Although Mrs Sidgwick was not antagonistic to belief in survival she concluded that the 'spirit' personalities who professed to communicate through Mrs Piper were actually dramatizations produced by the medium's unconscious mind, in a state of self-hypnosis.

Phinuit, one of Mrs Piper's chief controls was evidently fictitious. From 1884 to 1897 he claimed he was the departed spirit of a French physician who once practiced in Marseilles. He knew practically nothing of the French language and none of his numerous statements as to his life on earth ever proved capable of being verified.

In 1897, Phinuit was displaced by controls who professed to be a group of lofty spirits who had communicated purportedly in the 1870's through the famous medium Stainton Moses. This group



of guides had communicated under such pseudonyms as Imperator, Rector, and so on. The real names which they said had been theirs during earth-life were communicated in confidence to a few people, but were not published. When these supposed spirits communicated through Mrs Piper, they were never able to tell what their real names had been, though, when asked about it, they solemnly gave out incorrect names. When questioned about scientific matters, they gave nonsensical answers dressed up in pseudo-scientific jargon.

Bessie Beals was another pseudo-personality in the Piper trances. The famous psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, thought he would test Mrs Piper's powers by asking her to communicate with the spirit of a person who had really never existed. He invented an imaginary niece, Bessie Beals. There was no trouble at all in getting the same sort of 'communications' from this purely fictitious 'spirit' as had come through under the guise of messages from the dead. 'Thus,' as Tyrrell concluded (*Science and Psychical Phenomenon*, London, 1938) 'the reasons for regarding the communicators, as well as the controls in the Piper case, as being hypnotically constructed pseudo-personalities, appear to be very strong.'

Mrs Piper was not the only medium whose purported spirit communicators could not always be taken at their face value. Dr Soal published in 1926 a report on some communications received through Mrs Blanche Cooper (*Proc. S.P.R.* 35, 1926). In his and Bateman's book, *Modern Experiments in Telepathy*, published in 1954, he reviewed these subjects, including the cases of the fictitious John Ferguson and James Miles. By way of interpretation Dr Soal added these comments :

By the study of such cases we learn that the mere dramatization of a communicator by tricks of intonation, peculiar and consistent style of address and the like, affords no guarantee that we are in touch with discarnate agency. The tendency to impersonate seems to be a native tendency of the unconscious mind. It is the quality of the information they communicate and by that alone that we must test the claims of so-called 'spirits'.

There are cases of 'spirit communications' from men not actually dead. The most famous case of this kind is undoubtedly that of Gordon Davis. Dr Soal had known Gordon Davis when a boy and they had been in the same school. They both served in the first world war. In 1920 Soal heard that Davis had been killed. Afterwards the 'spirit' of Davis spoke to Soal through the medium Mrs Cooper and gave him veridical information including the correct names of persons known to Soal. The communicator

spoke, in Soal's opinion, with a voice and accent closely resembling Davis's—so closely that early in the first sitting Soal was impelled to cry out, 'By Jove, it's like Gordon Davis!' Three years after the sitting, in April, 1925, Soal found that Davis was still alive and practising as an estate agent in Southend. By means of a diary which he had kept in 1922, it was established that, at the very time his 'spirit' was so realistically communicating through Mrs Cooper in London, he was actually interviewing a client in Southend. At a second sitting in 1922 'Davis' gave a detailed account of Davis's house, which Soal noted down. This proved to be an accurate description of a house which Davis himself did not occupy until a year later. Dr Soal comments :

... the supernormal knowledge shown is of a high order. Not only is there penetration into the past of the 'communicator' but there are considerable indications that the future was also anticipated. This dramatized personality, so accurate in its other statements, apparently believed itself to be a deceased person.

A second example of purportedly spirit communication from a person not actually dead is the Reallier case, reported by James Hyslop, *A Case of Alleged Mind Reading*, *Journ. A.S.P.R.* 13, 1919, 130-6, 281-3, 492-4.

The apparently fictitious nature of the controls in Mrs Piper's séances suggested strongly the theory that they were secondary personalities dramatized out of her unconscious mind. An experimental test of this hypothesis as applied to Mrs Leonard's control, Feda, and Mrs Garrett's control, Uvani, was developed by Whately Carington. By testing both the normal Mrs Leonard and Feda with lists of stimulus words he found that Feda tended to respond slowly to various words to which Mrs Leonard reacted promptly and Feda tended to react promptly to words to which Mrs Leonard responded slowly. This countersimilarity would not be characteristic of an independent personality. Carington also found evidence that Mrs Garrett's control, Uvani, showed countersimilarity to Mrs Garrett (Whately Carrington, *The Quantitative Study of Trance Personalities*, *Proc. S.P.R.* 43, 1935, 329-40; Robert H. Thouless, *Review of Carington's Work on Trance Personalities*, id. 44, 1936-7, 255-63.

The mediumistic evidence both favourable and adverse to survival has now been sampled. We therefore face the question as to the extent to which such apparently opposed findings as those just cited can be reconciled under a single consistent hypothesis.



### III. THE PERSONA THEORY RECONCILES THE BASIC OPPOSED POSITIONS

Out of the centuries-old debate about survival three types of hypothesis have emerged :

The believers hold two of the three different hypotheses.

1. The possession hypothesis is the one defended by Drayton Thomas, Sir Oliver Lodge, and many others. It holds that surviving spirits of the dead take possession of the brains and the bodies of at least some of the best mediums, and that, under favourable conditions, they are able thus, and also by direct voice utterances, to come through with only minor distortions.

2. Telepathy from the dead is the second hypothesis. It holds that mediumistic utterances may result from a will to communicate on the part of surviving personalities. The apparent communicators (according to this hypothesis) are mere constructs, dramatized out of the mediums' unconscious minds, but these constructs provide channels for telepathic communication from the departed.

Disbelievers deny both of the above hypotheses.

3. Those who dismiss survival deny that spirits ever really take possession of any medium, or speak by direct voice, and they deny that genuine telepathic messages from the dead are ever received. They insist that all apparently communicating spirit personalities are mere dramatized constructs, created by ESP interaction between the unconscious minds of the medium, the sitter, other physically embodied persons, and past, present, and perhaps future, physical facts. They hold that any veridical information which may be transmitted in mediumistic sittings is derived by super-ESP from the living, not from the dead. By super-ESP the unconscious minds of those involved in a sitting are supposed to be able to reach out and assemble the super-normal information needed to produce a realistic impersonation of the deceased.

We need to combine all three hypotheses. The solution offered in this paper is a development of the proposition that no one of these three hypotheses is wholly true, to the exclusion of the others, but that the soundest theory presently available is to be derived by means of a creative combination of all three.

Dr Soal provided a clue. In presenting his experiences with the pseudo-spirit personality 'John Ferguson' he formulated the

following set of instructions for producing similar fictitious spirit personalities in sittings with mediums :

The stories about the communicator which the sitter suggests to his subconscious mind should in the first instance be plausible and not such as would conflict with the statements given by the communicator at the previous sittings. The arguments on which the sitter bases his conjectures of what is to transpire may be quite unsound from a logical point of view ; what seems important is that they should be psychologically suggestive. In other words the sitter must be able to convince the *irrational* side of his mind that the arguments he employs for arriving at his conclusions are plausible, and that his absurd conjectures have at least a sporting chance of coming true. It is necessary, in fact, that the ideas which he wishes to transfer to the medium should in the first place have become active in his own subconsciousness, for there is some evidence to show that it is those ideas which are coloured by an emotional tone which have the best chance of becoming externalized by automatism. In my own case I actually came to half-believe the things I supposed about John Ferguson.

Is not this what the communicators themselves profess to be doing? Dr Soal's proposed procedure, as outlined in the above paragraph, has the avowed purpose of creating a fictitious *persona* through the dramatizing capacities of the medium's unconscious mind. Excluding the fictitiousness of the objective, have not the communicators through Mrs Leonard professed that they have been seeking to register their own personas through the operations of her unconscious mind?

Let us suppose, as a working hypothesis, that an individual's physical body has died, but that his consciousness has survived and is attempting to communicate through a medium. Let us suppose that this surviving spirit follows very much the same sort of procedure which Dr Soal has set up for producing fictitious spirit personalities. Only, in the case of the surviving spirit, the subconscious elements consist in the earth memories and the ideas implanted by the spirit for communication while within the 'power circle' of the medium. If Dr Soal is correct (and his suggestions are in general in harmony with the observations of various other psychical researchers) then this surviving spirit might quite probably succeed in bringing about a series of trance-utterances which would more or less accurately reflect the spirit's surviving self. A persona would be created, and this persona would be the vehicle for the communicating spirit.

How is the persona related to the self? As a starting point let us take that which thinks 'I' in a given individual, the essential self—that which observes and acts at the core of the individual.



This 'I'-thinker calls many different objects 'mine'. He says, 'My body', 'my property', 'my memories', 'my purposes', 'my friends', and so on. The sum-total of what the 'I' calls 'mine' is what is meant by the *persona*. Obviously the 'I' and the *persona* are closely interrelated.

A given *persona* may be viewed and dealt with from the outside, by other persons who observe and act upon what that self calls 'mine' but what these others call 'yours' or 'his'.

Difficulties of communication would be encountered. Under the *persona* hypothesis of mediumistic communication we shall, of course, need to make due allowance for the difficulties of communication which are acknowledged by all experienced and frank investigators of the problem. The personality of the medium, her prejudices, ideas, and limitations must be supposed to enter in varying degrees into the creation of any 'communicator' *persona*. A genuine surviving personality would have powerful influence over his *persona* as active in a given mediumistic séance, but he might have to struggle against tendencies of the medium's personality to distort and colour what he was trying to communicate. Indeed the records of the séances provide abundant illustrations of such struggles. On the other hand, if no genuine surviving spirit was involved, the dramatizing tendency of the medium would presumably be free to develop whatever sort of *persona* fitted whatever information had been fed to her or had developed in connection with the basic ideas of the pseudo personality.

But these difficulties would be such as might be reduced to a minimum when the 'power' was at its height, when the emotional rapport between the communicator, the medium, the sitter, and the control (if any) was highly favourable, and when other conditions were such as to promote clear communication.

These more or less ideal conditions appear to have been approximated fairly frequently if not typically in Drayton Thomas's sittings with Mrs Leonard. On the other hand, it would seem evident that during considerable portions of Mrs Piper's mediumistic work, and to varying degrees with other sincere and genuine mediums, these ideal conditions were far from being uniformly realized. The *personas* constructed under these conditions appear to have been mosaic or hybrid entities, taking considerable portions of their utterances and their attitudes from the unconscious fabricating capacities of the medium herself and from other sources. Even with Mrs Piper, however, the George Pelham personality would appear to have been, for the most part, a fairly clear and valid *persona* through which the surviving spirit was

able to communicate with a high degree of facility and accuracy during most of his appearances in Mrs Piper's séances.

These communication difficulties have parallels. It should be noted that very much the same kind of problem appears in connection with historical fiction and fictionalized biographies. The author of such works seeks to present a plausible and interesting account in which many of the basic facts are more or less true to life, but in which some imaginative facts are introduced—and, at times (particularly in Hollywood versions of biographies and of historical events), the will to dramatize and to sensationalize brings about so radical a distortion that the original historical and biographical facts may become hardly recognizable.

Again, in the work of higher critics who attempt to get back to 'the historical Jesus', the problem of accretions, the tendential writing of the evangelists and of the other New Testament writers, the introduction of marginal speculations as if they were historical facts, and the like, present problems fairly similar to what psychical researchers encounter in their analysis of some of the personas which have come into existence in sittings with even first-rate and unquestionably genuine mediums.

#### A MORE FORMAL STATEMENT OF THE PERSONA THEORY

1. A persona is a personality-structure, developed with the aid of collaborative unconscious dramatizing capacities of the persons involved in a mediumistic sitting or in apparitional experience.

2. A persona may be fictitious in varying degrees. Some mediumistic personas may conceivably be as valid as is the ordinary personality of a physically embodied person. Minor distortions may be due to elements absorbed from the unconscious of the medium, or to the development and dramatization of misleading suggestions from various sources. At the other extreme, wholly fictitious personas may be produced.

3. In so far as those participating in the production of the persona possess ESP powers, veridical facts not normally known to the medium, the sitter or the percipient may become integral factors in the persona structure.

4. A persona may possess more or less initiative of its own, and may become the vehicle for an 'I'-thinking spirit.

5. Surviving spirits, working through genuine mediums, may create personas closely resembling their own personalities when on earth, and may use such personas as vehicles for communication and for spiritual activity in the earth environment.



6. Since an ordinarily embodied personality is a particularly longlasting persona, closely related functionally with the material world, that personality provides a pattern readily available for its former inhabiting 'I'-thinker and may provide the groundwork for veridical mediumistic communication.

## REVIEWS

TELEPATHIE EN HELDERZIENDHEID. By Professor W. H. C. Tenhaeff. Antwerpen, W. de Haan N.V., 1958. 157 pp., 34 illustrations.

So few accounts of the very extensive Dutch work in parapsychology seem to be available in English, and probably so few members can read Dutch that it is specially important to give as full and clear an account as possible of this informative and stimulating book.

Clearly Professor Tenhaeff has little use for 'off-the-peg parapsychology'. His investigations, as judged by some of the criteria which, in recent years, many of us have begun to accept as standard, must certainly be regarded as original, and possibly posterity may deem, at least some of them, truly great.

In British psychology there are signs of a movement away from 'research by the yard', *vide* a recent paper by Dr J. G. Taylor<sup>1</sup> with the provocative title 'Experimental Design: a cloak for intellectual sterility'.

As a student Tenhaeff read psychology with the avowed aim of specialising in psychical research and, according to Zorab's *Bibliography of Parapsychology* (p. 14), his first work appeared in 1926. In 1933 he was admitted as 'privaat-dozent' at the State University of Utrecht, and in 1953 he was appointed as professor, and put in charge of the Parapsychology Institute of that university. Students from other departments attend his lectures which, I understand, are always crowded.

'Telepathie en Helderziendheid' (Telepathy and Clairvoyance) is published in an edition called 'Phoenix Pockets', the style and level of presentation being roughly comparable to the very best 'Pelican' books: authoritative yet readable. It contains six chapters: *Memory, Telepathy, Precognition, Possession and Spirit Apparitions, Reincarnation and The So-called Quantitative Method*.

The sub-titles of these headings deserve special mention and also some linguistic elucidation. 'To remember' is 'zich herin-

<sup>1</sup> *Brit. J. Psychol.*, Vol. 49, pt. 2, 1958, pp. 106-16.

neren' in Dutch, which has the same root as the English 'inner' or 'inward'. Throughout the book the mental phenomena of psychical research are treated in the context of memory, and the word *inneren* is employed to indicate that, by looking inwards and observing his own images and feelings, the sensitive finds information which he has not obtained in the usual way: he finds it in his subjective experience as if it were a memory. If we freely translate 'inneren' by 'discovering within' the chapter headed Telepathy is subtitled: 'To remember and to discover within'; Precognition: 'Remembering the future'; Possession and Spirit Apparitions: 'To discover within what the dead were able to remember while on earth.'

There is a brief and lucid exposition of Bergson's theory of the inhibitory role of the brain in mental functioning, and accordingly ordinary remembering is regarded as a psychic process, guided, controlled (or inhibited) by the central nervous system, but not in any sense due directly to or created by, the brain. The reports of persons who have experienced what seemed like their whole past life 'passing in front of them' while in acute danger of death are discussed in this connection. The vastly increased clarity, extent and detail of memory under such conditions is thought to be due to the fact that, as we are facing death, we begin to lose our 'attention to life', and this phenomenon is therefore thought to be connected with a weakening of the influence of the brain. Some interesting examples are cited of this 'panorama' experience during moments of mortal peril. One lady actually had the experience twice: the second time she also 'saw' in addition what had happened to her since the first experience.

Tenhaeff goes on to give an account from the diary of Heinrich Zschokke, a Swiss Liberal politician and educational authority, who reported experiencing just such a panorama, not of his own life but of that of a fellow diner whom he had never met before. Thus we are introduced—quite naturally, if such a phrase can be used in this context—to the paranormal. The sensitive finds, in his own subjective world, the veridical occurrence as if it were a memory. There are some interesting reports concerning young delinquents. In one case a social worker, on having a nine-year-old boy brought to her, suddenly felt impelled to grasp his left hand and promptly 'saw in imagination in such a manner as if I had seen it previously and was now remembering it' (p. 34), a train of events culminating in the little boy's throwing a letter into a lavatory. This turned out to be quite correct; the letter was addressed to his father and contained a complaint by his teacher that the boy had stolen something from her bag.



Attention is drawn to the work of Galton and Jaensch on mental images. It is well known that there are very considerable individual differences as regards vividness of imagination. Tenhaeff found that many sensitives distinguish relevant veridical images from others on account of their greater clarity (*duidelijkheit*), liveliness, exclusiveness and pertinacity (p. 45). He finds that 'determining tendency' or 'set', which plays so considerable a role in general psychology<sup>1</sup>, is also important with respect to clairvoyant and telepathic performance. Not only are sensitives more successful with some people than with others, but indeed they are more likely to 'perceive' correctly incidents which are of emotional interest to themselves. For instance, one of his sensitives specialized on people's sex life, her own being particularly unsatisfactory and a matter of much concern and distress to her. In the case of another he noticed that the sensitive was especially good at telling birthdays. It turned out that he was the oldest of 17 children, and every time there was a new addition to the household he had to leave home and stay with his grandmother, all of which made a deep impression on him, particularly as he was much attached to his mother. Two further sensitives specialized on tracing missing children and were particularly successful in cases where they were subsequently found drowned: both of these 'paragnosts' had themselves narrowly escaped drowning in childhood. Depth psychological investigations at the Utrecht Parapsychology Institute suggest that with people who show paranormal abilities there is a relatively weak sense of individuality and a general lack of coherence between different 'contents of consciousness' (p. 53).

There are many interesting examples of precognitive dreams. In one instance a clergyman had a long and detailed dream of an episode involving people and places he had not previously encountered, which ended abruptly in his fainting as he was offered a cup of tea. With ever-growing alarm he watched his dream come true and, as tea time approached, he became increasingly terrified of fainting. However, he did not do so but the experience left him much shaken (p. 60).

Tenhaeff reports a 'Dunne-effect' of his own. He dreamed he saw rows and rows of the books of Karl May. Later in the day he received a catalogue announcing the publication in Dutch of the works of this very prolific writer that had greatly fascinated him when he was a boy (p. 62).

<sup>1</sup> See for example *Brit. J. Psychol.*, Vol. 49, pt. 2, 1958, pp. 117-30, G. A. Talland: 'The effect of auditory set on perception', and *Brit. J. Psychol.*, Vol. 48, pt. 4, 1957, pp. 259-70, E. C. Poulton: 'Previous knowledge and memory'.

The study of dream symbolism in connection with possible predictive significance is discussed. It appears that Dr Kooy, for instance, is particularly likely to dream in advance of people's deaths, which is symbolized by the fall of snow in a context which he associates with the person in question (p. 64). There is also a moving account by Mrs Hausmann, wife of the West German Senator and daughter of Professor H. Kohnstamm, of a dream symbolizing the totally unexpected and sudden death of her father, of whom she had not dreamt since her marriage more than twenty years previously. After a long and vivid series of dream events he said to her : 'Well, child, nice to see you, but I cannot stay any longer, I have no more time left, I can't talk to you now because I must go.' and while saying this he stepped into his own separate train. This stood all by itself, near its own platform, the engine pointing to the left ; and all other trains and all other people were moving to the right. [Then he added] 'But go now and join mother, she is all alone out there on the station platform' (pp. 67-8).

Those whose interest in the paranormal is its possible bearing on winning football pools or guessing horse racing results will be pleased to read that Mr H. J. R. R. te Roermond dreamed that ticket No. 3684 of the state lottery would win a large prize. Consequently he ordered this number which *did* indeed win £25,000 a few months later (p. 73).

As regards the notions of apparitions and possession by spirits, Professor Tenhaeff distinguishes between the animistic and the spiritistic, the former referring to the action of the soul of a living person, while the latter involves belief in the soul of a deceased person. He points to the very considerable frequency of veridical hallucinations of the living as constituting, in many cases, a contra-indication of the spiritistic theory. However, he is keeping an open mind on the subject and does not reject the spirit hypothesis as a possible explanation in some cases (p. 102).

He does not believe that the cosmological speculations of Drs Ortt and Kooy have so far done very much more than show that paranormal phenomena are less incomprehensible in the light of modern science than many people think. He considers, however, that such attempts are important and worthwhile (p. 97).

The chapter on reincarnation contains fairly lengthy descriptions of the phantasies of Hélène Smith, the regression experiments of de Rochas, the inevitable Bridey Murphey story and the far more challenging Shanti Devi and 'Watseka Wonder' cases. He is of the opinion that in the case of Shanti Devi, although spirit possession might be a possible hypothesis, 'dramatized



clairvoyance', which may take this form on account of the widespread belief in reincarnation in India, seems a preferable explanation.

The chapter on 'The so-called quantitative method' is the shortest and last in the book, but by no means the least impressive. Brief accounts are given of the application by Richet, shortly after the foundation of the S.P.R., of statistics to card guessing, and the work of Dietz in Holland between 1916 and 1917. Tenhaeff considers the publication of Dr Rhine's 'Extra-Sensory Perception' in 1934 to have constituted a landmark in parapsychological history, and that it is largely due to Rhine's work 'that nowadays the existence of extra-sensory perception is generally accepted as proved' (p. 142). However, he considers that Rhine and his collaborators have over-emphasized the quantitative method (p. 154, note 3), and that it is a mistake to regard such experiments as simply being small-scale models of what we find in spontaneous cases, and when working with sensitives: there are also qualitative differences (p. 153).

An account is given of the experiments of Professor Heymans of the psychology department of the University of Groningen in 1920. Jointly with Dr Brugmans (who succeeded him to the Chair) and the psychiatrist Dr Weinberg, Heymans designed an experiment especially for a particular subject on account of whose personality structure it was thought that he was most likely to be successful with a task involving motor images. (Tenhaeff emphasizes how important it is to adjust the experiment to the individual subject.) Under conditions which seem to have excluded, in one case totally, in the other very nearly so, all possibility of sensory clues, the subject endeavoured to trace with his finger on a chess board-like arrangement the squares which the experimenter willed him to trace. The results gave fantastic anti-chance values, even more colossal in the case of the more stringent conditions. Particular attention was paid to the subject's introspective reports, and success was found to be correlated with a feeling of passivity which was accompanied by a particular pattern in the psycho-galvanic skin response.

A fairly detailed description is also given of the investigations begun by van Buschbach and continued with the help of the Utrecht Institute, which involved altogether nearly 70,000 guesses by school children. In the first 47,070 cases, where the children were aiming at guessing symbols which were being looked at by their teachers, positive results with a critical ratio of 4.07 were obtained, whereas in the second series of 21,570 guesses, where a stranger was acting as 'sender', nothing significant was obtained.

Professor Tenhaeff takes this as an indication that the personality of and familiarity with the teacher are of importance, nevertheless it will be interesting to see in future experiments, whether the frequently reported decline effect plays a part. This might also be looked into in the case of the fascinating and imaginative experiments, still in progress, and conducted by Miss Louwerens of Professor Tenhaeff's department, who obtains guesses from Kindergarten children employing pictures of a doll, a toy car, a ball, a 'Bambi' and a pyramid of building blocks. There are 16 full page delightful as well as instructive photographs illustrating this experiment, three of the Heymans experiment, 13 photographs of experimental and testing procedures at the Utrecht laboratory and three others that are of general interest.

The book, no doubt scarcely more expensive than a Penguin, is worth getting for the illustrations alone. That Professor Tenhaeff's work is so little known in this country, and that resources have not been made available for translating his books into English seems quite incomprehensible. In 'Parapsychology' by Drs Rhine and Pratt which was 'written . . . with the coming need of a college text book in mind' there is not a single reference to Tenhaeff's work, only in the list of 'Some significant events in the development of parapsychology' is his professorial inauguration in 1953 mentioned. There cannot, in this reviewer's opinion, be any doubt that contact with the important Utrecht School would be of immense benefit to the English-speaking psychical research world, and that a translation of Tenhaeff's work would be a first step in this direction.

ANITA KOHSEN

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.  
52, No. 3, July 1958. (New York, A.S.P.R. \$1.50).

On 20 April 1937 the late Harry Price staged the last of a series of fire-walking tests, this one being televised and broadcast from the grounds of Alexandra Palace. A professional fire-walker Ahmed Hussain, was followed across a fire surface at 800° C by an amateur, Reginald Adcock.<sup>1</sup> Neither was burned. Price concluded: 'The experiments proved once and for all that no occult or psychic power, or a specially induced mental state, is necessary in a fire-walker.'

Mayne Reid Coe, Jr., a research chemist, has carried the investigation a good deal further, and in *Fire-walking and Related*

<sup>1</sup> *Fifty Years of Psychical Research* (Longmann, Green & Co., 1939) p. 261.



*Behaviours* he describes how he performed all the following actions without mishap: touched red-hot iron with his fingers and with his tongue, touched molten iron with his tongue, bent red-hot steel bars by stamping on them with his bare feet, ran barefoot on red-hot iron, walked on red-hot rocks, plunged his fingers into molten lead, brass and iron, carried red-hot coals around in his hands and popped them into his mouth, walked on beds of red-hot coals taking eight steps to cross a fourteen foot pit, placed fingers, hands and feet in candle flames until covered with carbon black, and held his face, hands and feet in the fire for a short time. The contacts were of brief duration as he 'never wished to continue the contact to the threshold of pain' and he was faintly burned only once.

Mr Coe reviews some historical cases of fire-walking and the like and says the purpose of his experiments was to prove that such stories could very easily have been true.

J. L. Woodruff reports an investigation of an interesting poltergeist which he made in collaboration with Dr J. G. Pratt of the Parapsychology Laboratory. He concludes that the case does not give a basis for a clear-cut decision regarding the presence or absence of parapsychological manifestation.

In 'Checking Success and the relationship of personality traits to ESP', Carroll B. Nash and Catherine S. Nash report a study which confirms in part earlier results by Nicol and Nicol.

R. A. McConnell reviews *Parapsychology: Frontier Science of the Mind* by J. B. Rhine and J. G. Pratt; Professor C. J. Ducasse reviews *The Meaning of Immortality in Human Experience* by W. E. Hocking, and Dr Ian Stevenson reviews *The Third Eye* by T. Lobsang Rampa.

DENYS PARSONS

JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY, 22, No. 1, March 1958, Durham, N.C.

Mr Forwald is well known for the impressive results he has obtained by self-experimentation in Sweden with PK experiments in which the aim is to influence the place at which the dice come to rest. These 'placement' experiments have now been repeated by Mr Forwald at Duke University with observers of the Parapsychological Laboratory present. The positive results reported in the Swedish experiments are amply confirmed. This research does not (and is not intended to) advance our knowledge of PK. It adds to the weight of evidence for PK by promoting the Forwald series of experiments from the class of one-observer experiments to that of witnessed experiments.

An interesting report by Margaret Anderson and Rhea White carries further van Bussbach's work on ESP with teachers of percipients acting as senders. When two teachers were simultaneous senders of two different packs, there seemed to be a clear tendency for students to guess the card that was being looked at by the better liked teacher. The authors point out various respects in which the experiment could be improved, and regard their present findings as exploratory.

G. H. Wood and R. Cadoret report experiments in ESP in which the ostensible subject was a dog who pawed from one to five times in order to indicate the target card. Highly significant results were obtained in a series of 20 witnessed runs with packs in sealed envelopes; average score 7.6 hits per run. As the authors report, these experiments show good evidence of ESP in a situation involving some type of man-dog relationship but they cannot be regarded as demonstrating what part in the process was played by the dog. This is a problem for future research.

In 'Comments and Letters', there is a sympathetic but critical discussion by Dr Chari of the paper by Dr Kooy on 'Space, Time and Consciousness' which appeared in the December number. Dr Chari questions the view that the past-future relationship has no physical reality. A brief reply by Dr Kooy reaffirms his position.

Professor Hornell Hart and Mrs Rhine continue their controversy as to whether the evidence shows any intention to communicate by an agent in apparitions of the dead.

A new section of 'Parapsychological Abstracts' consists of abstracts of reports published elsewhere or unpublished. This seems to be a useful innovation.

JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY, 22, No. 2, June 1958, Durham, N.C.

The report by J. G. Pratt and W. G. Roll on 'The Seaford Disturbances' is a model of what a report on alleged poltergeist phenomena should be like. We have travelled far from the days when the task of the psychical researcher could be regarded as that of merely thinking up a plausible or implausible naturalistic explanation of the phenomena and maintaining that this was the only possible right explanation. The authors have asked themselves what I think are the right questions: first, whether there is any evidence in favour of a paranormal explanation, and secondly (if there is such evidence) how convincing the evidence is. In a carefully described and well documented study, they find evidence that seems inconsistent with a naturalistic explanation. They also

find that the conditions of investigation are such that evidence for the phenomena being due to spontaneous PK is very far from conclusive.

Dr Jarl Fahler has already in Finland produced evidence that his subjects score better under hypnosis. Such experiments have often been tried, generally with little success. In collaboration with Dr Cadoret, Fahler has now repeated this success at Duke University. The difference in score in favour of his hypnotized subjects, doing clairvoyance experiments with packs screened from view, was large and highly significant. No details are given of the method or of the depth of hypnotization.

Dr Schmeidler's praiseworthy attempt to apply the Pratt-Birge formula to mediumistic material seems to have been shipwrecked by the use of a method of assessment too complicated for any known statistical method of estimating significance. She gives weights to items of information proportioned to the estimated improbability of their fitting any sitter by chance. This seems unobjectionable, but she further employs a method of multiplying together these weights within different categories of response. Whatever may be the justification for this, it obviously makes the figures obtained of doubtful appropriateness for a significance test by the Pratt-Birge formula or in any other way. Dr Schmeidler, however, applies the Pratt-Birge formula and finds the figures significant although the weighted figures, without the dubious step of multiplication within categories, are insignificant when tested by the same formula. The results of the enquiry are not, however, wholly negative when the above result is rejected. Table 5 shows a preponderance of highly weighted items in 'own' items as compared with those belonging to other sitters. The level of significance is not high, but the results are strongly suggestive of a real effect.

R. H. THOULESS

## CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—May I, as a recently retired officer of the Society, pay my tribute to two colleagues, Admiral Strutt and Denys Parsons, M.Sc., who are now themselves retiring after many years valuable service. How valuable their services have been is known, without need of reminder, to every member who has been able to keep in close touch with our work. But there may be some who have recently joined or who live at a distance and would therefore be glad to hear more about them.



Admiral Strutt is the son of one of our most distinguished Presidents, Lord Rayleigh, O.M., F.R.S.—whose interest in psychical research went back beyond the foundation of the Society—and brother of another, the Lord Rayleigh who was President in 1937 and 1938. He has fully upheld the family tradition of devoted service and generosity to the Society. In 1935, when he became Honorary Treasurer, the S.P.R. was making a slow recovery from financial and other troubles. Even severer trials were to come with the Second World War and the post-war inflation. It is in no small measure due to him that when he laid down office the Society was in every way in a healthier and more prosperous condition.

During the war a group of younger members met, usually in Mr and Mrs Richmond's flat, for discussion and research, and so enabled active work to be resumed as soon as conditions permitted. Of this group Mr Parsons was a leading member. He was co-opted to the Council in 1945, and appointed as joint Honorary Secretary in 1949. In addition to his full share of the routine work of that office, he undertook the arrangement of the discussion meetings, providing a fuller and more varied programme than the Society had ever previously enjoyed. He freely placed at the Society's disposal his expert knowledge of applied science when advice on apparatus was required, or when there were negotiations, as, for example, about filming material filed in S.P.R. records. He has been and we hope will continue to be a regular and valued contributor to the pages of the Society's publications.

More perhaps than any other member of the Society I am sensible of a debt of gratitude to both of them.

W. H. SALTER

## MASS ESP TESTS

SIR,—In an article 'A Mass ESP Test Using Television' in the *S.P.R. Journal* for September 1957 Dr Michie describes a new method of evaluating mass ESP data. The purpose of the method is to avoid the well known statistical difficulties which arise from the 'stacking' effect when many subjects guess at the same target sequence. Dr Michie describes the problem, and his solution, with great clarity in the article; very roughly, it amounts to estimating the amount of stacking from the data themselves and using this estimate to allow for stacking when evaluating the scores.

This principle has been used before. Whenever ESP experiments are evaluated by the t-test (i.e. using an empirical, instead

of *a priori*, estimate of the variance) we are effectively applying the same principle. However, Dr Michie's application is more subtle than the t-test because it takes into account more possible types of stacking.

Unfortunately it does not answer the theoretical objection which can be raised against any such method. Given that we must make no assumptions whatever about guessing preferences, it is impossible to devise a method in which the guesses are treated in any way as a random variate. Any logically sound method must take the guesses as given and the targets as the random variate, and no amount of internal analysis of the guess data can get around this fact.

On the other hand *external* evidence (for example, data from other experiments showing that stacking does not occur or has no effect) can be, and has been, imported to serve this purpose. This is legitimate if done with proper care, and indeed it is probably safe to say that the evidence by now accumulated shows that, except for crucial experiments or very short series, stacking may be ignored in practice with reasonable safety. (*J. Parapsychology*, 1949, 13, p. 157.) In the Michie-West experiment the run was, of course, very short (18 trials) and only three different symbols were used. The authors report (p. 121) that stacking *was* occurring to an important extent, though this was the type of stacking which the method was designed to allow for. How much stacking occurred which could not be allowed for we cannot say, so that the practical importance of the present criticism is unknown. All that is certain is that Dr Michie has not, as he thought, solved the theoretical problem.

I have discussed this matter with Dr Michie and I am authorized to state that he now agrees with this conclusion. Further, as regards his footnote on p. 119, he now agrees that his method is open to criticism on the above theoretical grounds whether the targets were a Finney-Outhwaite *or* a random sequence.

Another point in the same article which calls for comment is in the analysis of the follow-up tests with the successful subject Mr Downey. On pp. 129-30 an analysis compares the results obtained with Fisk and West as agents, and a highly significant difference between the two agents is reported. This analysis ignores the fact that a large part (and by far the most successful part) of the Fisk series took place under conditions very different from those of the West series. It is quite possible that these conditions alone were responsible for the difference between Fisk and West as agents. If we examine only those series carried out by the two agents *under similar conditions* (Experiments IV and V),

we find a barely significant difference between the agents ( $P=0.05$ ). In this experiment, therefore, there is hardly enough evidence to allow conclusions about the relative effectiveness of Fisk and West as agents.

However, the authors back their conclusions by independent evidence. They refer to an article 'A Dual ESP Experiment with Clock Cards' in the *S.P.R. Journal*, 37, 1953, by D. J. West and G. W. Fisk, and state that in this work 'it was found . . . that the general run of subjects scored significantly with Fisk but not with West'. Reference to the article in question (p. 190) shows that this was *not* found. What was found was that a few subjects scored significantly with Fisk and one with West. Further probing reveals a very similar source of ambiguity to that which we have just noted in the Downey analysis, for two of the subjects were granddaughters of Fisk, but none were related to West. If we remove the scores of these two subjects, the difference between Fisk and West as agents vanishes completely (or, more exactly, drops to the same value as the difference observed in the cross-check control test). Thus here the difference between Fisk and West could be wholly explained by the presence among the percipients of two relatives of Fisk. There is no evidence of any difference between the agents as such. (Incidentally, the most successful percipient scored  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as high with West as with Fisk and her score with West is the highest in the whole experiment.)

Dr West's belief that he is a jinx is hardly warranted by the facts. The evidence would support almost equally easily an alternative hypothesis: that it has simply been his misfortune to conduct experiments under conditions less favourable than those of his 'rival' agent, Mr Fisk.

CHRISTOPHER SCOTT

SIR,—I read with great interest in the September 1958 issue of the *Journal* Mr Lambert's attempt to explain away the Cheltenham Ghost by the underground water hypothesis.

If I have rightly understood his argument, he suggests that the percipients of the 'lady in black' had first been hearing all kinds of mysterious noises (brought about by the antics of underground water) which after some time were believed to be of a spooky nature. Once the conviction had been formed that the house was haunted the apparition was projected by them owing to some kind of association of ideas.

It seems to me, however, that Mr Lambert's hypothesis breaks down completely when we take into account Rose Despard's own statement as to how she perceived the apparition for the first time.



She writes: 'I had gone to my room, but was not yet in bed, when I heard someone at the door, and went to it, thinking it might be my mother. On opening the door, I saw no one, but on going a few steps along the passage, I saw the figure of a tall lady, dressed in black, standing at the head of the stairs —' (*Proc. S.P.R.*, 8, p. 313, 1892).

Rose went to the door thinking it was her mother and not for an instant believing it could be a ghost. There is not a single indication, as far as I am aware of, that Rose thought the house to be haunted before she perceived the apparition for the first time. Further, one should not lose sight of the fact that Miss Despard was at the time a medical student. A woman studying medicine in the eighties must have been pretty hard boiled, and not easily induced to believe in such 'superstitions' as ghosts and haunting, even if she heard mysterious noises in the house she could not easily explain.

Another fact against Mr Lambert's theory is that the Despard's opposite neighbour, General A. (*Proc. S.P.R.*, 8, p. 316), saw the apparition (without knowing it was not a human being!) *in the orchard of the Despard family*. If General A. had been worried by underground water noises into believing that his house was haunted, and was worked up into the suitable psychological condition to project an apparition at any moment, then why did he project it into the Despard's orchard, instead of into one of the rooms of his own house, the most obvious thing to do! And further, why should General A. project an apparition the exact counterpart of the Despard ghost? If it really had been a pure fabrication of his imagination, then why was the product not quite different in appearance to the Despard ghost? Why should it be exactly alike, a most unlikely development from a psychological point of view.

Several other data concerning the relation between apparition and percipient could be brought forward, as well as the specific nature of the noises heard, disproving Mr Lambert's hypothesis which, I regret saying, did not convince me.

G. ZORAB

SIR,—The explanation of poltergeists, ghosts etc. by the sounds made by underground streams, and by the resulting subsidence in houses, becomes less rather than more convincing. Difficulties seem to be too lightly passed over by holders of the theory, and very common objects such as wells and sewers too readily noticed in required positions. Where there is no subsidence, as at Cheltenham, how are the noises of the stream conveyed, then to

be misinterpreted as footsteps and swishing skirts? Why, even where (as in my own house) subsidence is so marked that floors slant and pens roll off tables, does nobody ever hear any noises? I once thought I saw the ghost of a woman, and my housekeeper once saw the ghost of a cat, but nary a mysterious sound to give support.

In the present case nobody could accuse Mr G. W. Lambert of 'making things fit', for he reminds us that the Cheltenham ghost was seen and heard chiefly in the eastern part of the house, and then shows the supposed stream upon the western side.

I would like to believe this theory; had no predisposition not to ; have no rival theory—but now find I can't.

E. B. C. LUCAS

SIR,—Mr Lambert in his article in the September 1958 issue of the *Journal* has been so anxious to account for the Cheltenham ghost by means of his underground water theory that he may mislead readers who are not able to consult the record in the *S.P.R. Proceedings*, Vol. VIII. Those who consult this record will see that the Cheltenham ghost cannot be accounted for on so facile an explanation.

*The auditory phenomena.* No doubt some of the noises heard might be ascribed to disturbances caused by a hypothetical stream but can it be maintained seriously that such a theory provides a satisfactory explanation of incidents such as the following? ' . . . they all five stood at their doors with their lighted candles for some little time. They all heard steps walking up and down the landing between them ; as they passed they felt a sensation which they described as "a cold wind", though their candles were not blown about. They saw nothing. The steps then descended the stairs, re-ascended, again descended, and did not return.'

*The visual phenomena.* Mr Lambert writes, "There is no doubt that phenomena, in the nature of noises and movements which are believed to be "ghostly", can so work on the minds of witnesses that some individuals begin to "see things".' The inference here is that this line of reasoning applies to Rose Despard but on reading the full account of her first sight of the ghost (not the account as edited by Mr Lambert) it will be seen how improbable it is. 'I had gone up to my room, but was not yet in bed, when I heard someone at the door, and went to it, thinking it might be my mother. On opening the door, I saw no one ; but on going a few steps along the passage, I saw the figure of a tall lady, dressed in black, standing at the head of the stairs. After a few minutes she descended the stairs, and I followed for a short distance,

feeling curious what it could be. I had only a small piece of candle, and it suddenly burnt itself out ; and being unable to see more, I went back to my room.'

There is no evidence whatsoever that strange noises are likely to cause hallucinations of this nature in an intelligent person in normal health, as suggested by Mr Lambert. We must also remember that Myers saw and was favourably impressed by Miss Despard, a lady, as he tells us, of scientific training who was preparing to become a physician.

When one also considers the other occasions on which the ghost was seen, not only by Rose Despard, but by others, it will be obvious how totally inadequate this hallucination idea becomes.

*The ghost's identity.* The ghost was identified at the time with the second Mrs Swinhoe, a widow, and Mr Lambert writes, 'The identification of the ghost was arrived at by Rose Despard on the grounds (a) that it must have been some former widowed occupant of the house, and (b) that there was no other widow since 1860, when the house was built, who it could have been. Assumption (a) is fallacious, and (b), therefore, does not necessarily follow.' This cursory dismissal of Miss Despard's reasons omits, however, all reference to the third of the five reasons which she gives, 'Although none of us had ever seen the second Mrs S. several people who had known her identified her from our description. On being shown a photo-album containing a number of portraits, I picked out one of her sister as being most like that of the figure, and was afterwards told that the sisters were much alike.'

Why does Mr Lambert omit all reference to this important reason? Is it because he wishes to discredit Miss Despard or because it is just one of those things which cannot be accounted for by his theory?

*The duration of the phenomena.* Mr Lambert considers that his theory provides a very convincing answer as to why the noises practically ceased in 1886, for that was the date when the new reservoirs were opened and which, presumably, diminished the flooding of the hypothetical underground stream which he supposes caused the ghostly noises.

In the first place it must be pointed out that Mr Lambert has by no means proved the existence of any such stream. When he discusses the matter words such as 'probable', 'assumed', 'a reasonable inference', are used after which the existence of the stream is taken for granted. The record, also, does not state that the noises stopped in 1886. What it does say is as follows, 'During the next two years, 1887 to 1889, the figure was very seldom seen, though footsteps were heard ; the louder noises had



gradually ceased. From 1889 to the present, 1892, so far as I know, the figure has not been seen at all; the lighter footsteps lasted a little longer, but even they have now ceased.' The indications are, therefore, that the phenomena were gradually ceasing, as is not unusual, and there is no reason to associate this with the opening of the reservoir.

In conclusion, Mr Lambert's underground water theory may account for a few of the strange noises heard in certain houses but it breaks down when visual phenomena occur, especially when they are so strongly developed as in the Cheltenham case. It would be interesting to know on what evidence Mr Lambert bases his assumption that strange noises can 'trigger off' visual hallucinations in normal people.

B. NISBET

#### COMMENTS BY MR G. W. LAMBERT

THE EDITOR has kindly given me an opportunity to read and comment on the foregoing three letters. As the arguments to some extent overlap, I will deal with the three letters together.

Both Mr Nisbet and Mr Zorab cite the passage in the original record, where Miss Despard describes the incidents leading up to her first sight of the ghost, and regard it as quite incompatible with my line of explanation. The suggestion is that this fuller account puts quite a different complexion on the events from that given by my references to it near the top of p. 268. Miss Despard, when she heard someone at her bedroom door, thought it was her mother, a point I did not mention, and did not expect to see a ghost. My point was that she thought it was a *person* (whether her mother or another member of her family did not signify). When she opened the door and saw no one there, she must have been taken aback and mystified. She then took a few steps along the passage and saw a tall lady dressed in black at the top of the stairs. Although some people might explain it away as being the shadow cast by someone else, standing in the doorway of her bedroom, with a lighted candle on the table behind her, I personally accept Miss Despard's statement. Like F. W. H. Myers, I think she was a reliable witness, and accurately described what she saw. The doubt I feel is whether the figure she saw was the ghost of Imogen Swinhoe.

Mr Nisbet cites another incident, not referred to by me at all, which he considers inconsistent with my hypothesis. It was the occasion when five members of the household stood at their bedroom doors with lighted candles for some little time, listening to

footsteps going up and down the passage and the stairs, nothing being seen to account for them. My comment is that as five persons at the same time heard the sounds, they were undoubtedly real sounds, and not auditory hallucinations. But I do not think they were footsteps, though they may have sounded very like them. So-called 'footsteps' are a very common occurrence in cases of haunting, including cases where underground water is beyond doubt the cause of the noises. A recent instance of the latter kind is the Sowerby case, where footsteps and other noises were heard, and the cause was traced beyond reasonable doubt to a disused water conduit (see *Four Modern Ghosts* by Eric J. Dingwall and Trevor H. Hall (Duckworth, 1958), pp. 102-5). In short, the incident cited by Mr Nisbet confirms, rather than disproves my hypothesis. How exactly the sounds of 'footsteps' are produced is a puzzle which awaits solution. Mrs Lucas would like to know, and so would I. All that one can say at present is that these and other queer sounds fall into two main classes :

1. Sounds made by the water itself, which are conducted by the subsoil and material of the building up into the house. Where the house is on a very hard stratum the noises are liable to be louder, and the shocks, if any, more violent than if the house is on chalk or clay.

2. Sounds caused by the straining of the woodwork of the house, especially the staircase, by upward pressure from below. The slow action of underground water often causes the subsidence of buildings overhead, leaving visible traces, in the form of cracked walls, sloping floors and dropped lintels, but Mrs Lucas should not suppose that in all cases of subsidence there must at some stage have been mysterious noises.

It should also be noted that underground channels, being enclosed above, tend to spread sideways for many yards under flood conditions. Mrs Lucas comments on the fact that in the Sketch Plan on p. 269 the dotted line passes west of the house, whereas the part most affected was the east end. At the risk of now being accused of making the facts fit the theory, I must explain that the dotted line only shows the assumed direction of the stream, and not its width under flood conditions. There may have been a 'weak place' under the east end, which 'felt' the pressure most. Judging from the lie of the land, there was not enough head of water to do any noticeable damage to the building, or to make any *very* loud noises.

To return to the ghost, Mr Nisbet says that 'There is no evidence whatsoever that strange noises are likely to cause hallucinations of this nature in an intelligent person in normal health,

as suggested by Mr Lambert'. He would like to know on what evidence I base my assumption that strange noises can 'trigger off' visual hallucinations in normal people. I dealt with this subject in my Presidential Address, delivered in December 1955, and gave two other instances, besides the Cheltenham case (*Proc.*, 50, part 185, pp. 284-7). A third instance is given in the paper now under comment, namely the ghost seen by Mr Drury in Willington Mill in 1834 (p. 274). There are several others in the Society's records. I would also refer Mr Nisbet to the view of the authors of *Four Modern Ghosts*, cited above. On p. 100 they say 'Prolonged fear and mystification, for example, can cause otherwise quite normal persons to see hallucinatory figures which are believed in some way to be connected with the phenomena which have induced them.' The seeing of such figures is by no means confined to persons of a credulous or timid disposition. Tough people, as Mr Zorab thinks Miss Despard was, or like Drury, of the Willington Mill incident, who claimed to have been an utter sceptic, are liable to see them. It is by no means certain that a *prolonged* period of mystification is necessary. A short period of acute suspense may be enough, when, for instance, footsteps are heard outside the door, and the hearer finds no one there, or when a door opens by itself, as though someone was coming through, or when on a winter's night footsteps are heard outside, and taps are heard on the window, but on looking out of it, one sees nobody, and there are no footprints in the snow. Most of us, of course, would see nothing, but unless we are to ignore or disbelieve the considerable number of cases of hallucination in such circumstances, we must try to account for them. In a good many cases the figure seen is too vague to be identified with anyone, but there are nearly always people about who are only too ready to hazard an identification.

Mr Zorab refers to the seeing of the ghost by General A. in the Despard's orchard, thinking at first that it was a real person. Ghosts seen out of doors are usually taken to be real persons, until they suddenly disappear or do something inconsistent with their being such. If, as is likely, he had heard the stories going round about the Garden Reach ghost, it is not surprising that he saw it dressed in the then very standardized garb of a widow. His imagination was stimulated not by unaccountable noises, but by what he had heard. Nevertheless, he had no control over the time or manner of the ghost's appearance, which was quite unlooked for at the moment, so far as his conscious self was concerned.

Mr Nisbet is much impressed by the photo-album incident. My comment is that apparently before the album was produced Miss Despard had discussed with 'several people' the appearance



of Imogen Swinhoe, and it is a reasonable assumption that the members of the family had a pretty good idea as to what she looked like. The ghost on the other hand usually hid its face, and wore garments which, including some white detail, afforded very poor evidence of identity. We are not told whether the sister's photograph was head and shoulders or full length, nor whether there was a photograph of Mrs Swinhoe herself in it or not, nor what the identifying details were. There seemed to me to have been every opportunity for the unconscious tendency, referred to by me on p. 276, whereby a false identification is arrived at in perfectly good faith.

In two respects Mr Nisbet has, I think, read more into my statements than they were meant to convey, and I do not see that there is much difference between us. He points out that I have by no means proved the existence of the underground stream. I was at some pains to make it clear that I made no such claim, and on p. 272 described the evidence I had produced as circumstantial and inconclusive. But so long as that evidence is not disproved, it affords a more probable explanation of the phenomena than any hypothesis importing a wholly unknown paranormal kind of agency. Secondly, he takes exception to my statement (p. 270) that the noises 'practically stopped' in 1886. What I meant by that is made clear at the top of p. 272. In 1886 there was such a marked drop in the loudness and frequency of the noises that from then onwards they seem to have diminished to an occasional and slight recurrence of 'footsteps'. There is no dispute as to the facts, and the sudden change for the better in 1886 is just what one would expect on my hypothesis.

In conclusion, I must point out that I have not questioned the good faith or reliability of any of the witnesses, who either heard noises or saw the ghost. I have only raised doubts as to the identification of the ghost as that of Imogen Swinhoe. If it was not hers, the way is open for an alternative explanation. I have tried to give one, but am prepared to abandon it in favour of a more convincing hypothesis, if someone will advance it.

G. W. LAMBERT

SIR,—As a general rule we do not consider the *Journal* a suitable place for the discussion of material not printed in its pages, but the letter from Mr Stevens in the issue of September 1958 calls for some comment, since the Runcorn poltergeist case has already been mentioned in the *Journal*.

We are very grateful to Mr Stevens for his additional comments and for clearing up some points which were either not sufficiently

appreciated or, more likely, misunderstood by us in the course of our inquiry. It is now made plain that the new facts to which Mr Stevens has drawn our attention make the case even more mysterious and puzzling than it was before; and our own suspended judgment concerning the interpretation of the phenomena seems even better justified.

With regard to Mrs Goldney's letter little need be said. It is true that Mr Hall wrote asking her to jot down any private information she had on the Rosalie case, hoping that she might supply further facts, arising from her intimate association with Mr Harry Price, which she had felt unable to reveal during Mr Price's lifetime. Unfortunately she had nothing new or private to tell, but repeated what she had already told many people about the incident and this was clearly neither private nor confidential in any sense. Further, we did not say that she told Mr Hall the words which, she states, were 'lifted' from Dr Tabori's book. They are 'in quotes' because they occur in Dr Tabori's book, to which we gave the full reference on p. 52 of our book. With regard to Mrs Goldney's belief in the Rosalie story, her statements still seem to us to prove this beyond reasonable doubt. We may add that as late as June 1958 she is reported as having told the *Two Worlds* that she did not believe that Mr Price invented the Rosalie story. However, we are not interested in nor concerned with what Mrs Goldney believes or disbelieves. That is entirely her own affair. What we were primarily concerned with was her account of her meeting with Price and any additional evidence that she might have obtained later.

E. J. DINGWALL  
TREVOR H. HALL

## EXCERPTA

*From a review by Herbert Dingle of 'The Physicist's Conception of Nature' by W. H. Heisenberg.*

THIS book is of interest chiefly from the fact that its author is one of the main originators of the modern physicist's view of the world. . . . The author's general conclusion is that the beginnings of modern science were marked by a conscious limitation of scope, which during the nineteenth century was forgotten, with the result that physics was considered to make assertions about nature as a whole. Recent work compels a return to the original limitation.

*Sir Julian Huxley in the 'Sunday Times'*

How can man resolve psychological conflict, how attain inner peace and spiritual harmony? What is the value of 'mystical' experiences of self-transcendence, and can the techniques of attaining them like Yoga, be readily communicated and learnt? We must follow up all clues to the existence of untapped possibilities like extra-sensory perception. They may prove to be as important as the once unsuspected electrical possibilities of matter.

*From 'The Inala', a tale from the Western Pacific by D. C. Horton, in 'The Listener'*

LIVING on Malapa was a famous old man, the Inala of Marau Sound. I suppose that the nearest translation of Inala is to say it means a medium. I had heard something about the powers of these people when I was on Malaita. I remember the district officer telling me about one particular case in which there was clear evidence of telepathy. It happened in 1927, and in those days the Malaita people were still very wild and, generally speaking, the power of government had not spread far on the island. In fact, the people thought that if they got rid of the district officer and his staff there would be no more government and they could revert to their old wicked ways with impunity: they had no idea that there was a central government in Tulagi and that Malaita was one of several districts. Matters came to a head when the omens told Basiana, the chief priest of the Sinerango people, that the time was ripe for the killing of the district officer and his staff; and so when they came to collect tax from his people they were murdered.

That happened at 11 a.m. on 4 October 1927, and at exactly that time, some hundred miles to the north, a government medical dresser was told by the local Inala that the murders were taking place. There was absolutely no possibility of the Inala having been given the news earlier: the murders had only been decided on that morning, the Inala had never been to Sinerango and did not know any Sinerango people, and it was impossible to communicate in any way by smoke signals or drums.

*Sir George Thomson, F.R.S., in the 'Sunday Times'*

THE evidence for extra-sensory perception is quite good, good enough to produce acceptance if what is claimed were not such a



fundamental upsetting of the systems of thought adopted by most moderns and especially by scientists. For it seems that the evidence for clairvoyance is about as good, and of the same kind, as that for thought-transference, so that it is difficult to accept the one and reject the other. The evidence for pre-cognition and 'telekinesis' is also strong and all three are much less easy to fit into our general scheme of thought than is thought-transference.

The importance of the subject is enormous and much too little work is being done on it. If true it will bring about a revolution in thought. The evidence is strong, but not strong enough, partly because relatively few people have worked on it. Even if the whole thing turns out to be untrue, a lot will be learned in proving it so.

The true fundamental relation of mind to matter is the deepest secret of the Universe.

### *Report in the 'Daily Express'*

THE 25 boys and girls living in St Agnes Home for Children say a fairy visits them regularly but to the staff she is a ghost. The sisters of the Anglican Community who run the Home at Thames Ditton, Surrey, call her The White Lady. They say she haunts the older part of the house which used to be one of Cardinal Wolsey's hunting-boxes. Sister Kathleen said: 'The last time I saw her in daylight she was walking along the passage in daylight. She was dressed in a long white robe—perhaps a bridal gown—and had a white veil on her head.'

Others of the staff also say they have seen her—usually at 2 a.m. The house was built at the same time as Hampton Court Palace, a few miles away.

The children are eight weeks to ten years old. Said Sister Kathleen: 'They talk about a fairy in the house, and I must admit she has a most fairylike appearance. There is nothing frightening about her.'

An independent enquiry revealed that apparently only one of the children had actually seen the White Lady. He, Francis (7-8 years) described her as a kind lady whom he had seen twice. Once was on a cold day and she had 'made him feel warm'. She was dressed in white. He had not noticed any head-dress but her hair was golden and she had sparkling eyes. He had not seen her feet and had heard no sounds. He was not in the least bit scared.

The Sister said her dress was in the same style as that of the statue of Queen Anne in the Kingston market-place. She had not thought of exorcism because she rather liked their 'ghost' who was clearly beneficent.

The house and school was televised in the B.B.C. 'Tonight' programme on 10 October 1958.

*Letter in the 'British Medical Journal', 27 Sept. 1958.*

SIR,—On paying my usual routine visit one Tuesday afternoon to a male patient of mine dying from cancer of the lung, the patient took hold of my hands, thanked me for all my attention, and then proceeded to tell me that I would not need to call and see him after Thursday, as he was going to die at 2.30 that afternoon. Needless to say, I comforted him the best way I could, told him to exclude such thoughts from his mind, and promised to look in again.

On late Thursday afternoon I received a message from a member of his family that their father had passed away peacefully. A few days later two daughters of the deceased came to consult me, and in the course of our conversation told me that the day before their father died he had summoned all the members of the family together and repeated to them what he had told me—namely, that he would die the following day at 2.30. On the predicted day, all the members of his family were with him in his bedroom except his wife. As 2.30 was approaching he urgently called for his wife to come in, saying, 'Hurry, hurry, before it is too late.' She came running into the room, and on the stroke of 2.30, according to the two daughters, 'He sighed, raised both hands behind his head, smiled, and passed away.' I wonder if any of my colleagues have had a similar experience.

*Letters in the 'British Medical Journal', 11 Oct. 1958.*

SIR,—The mystery of premonition of death has interested me since I first came across it in 1949. At the time I was working in a large Arab refugee camp in Jordan. Amongst my many patients was a youth of 16, whom I knew well, who was suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis. We were able to confirm radiologically that the condition was not far advanced and clinically his condition did not give cause for undue anxiety, though facilities for treatment were unfortunately very limited. There were two noteworthy features about this boy—firstly, he was simple-minded and was regarded in fact as something of a joke by his friends and relations; secondly, he was a very devout Moslem. His father, a sheikh, had formerly been a man of some wealth, but the son had always eschewed material possessions and all he had earned had been given away to the poor.

Some weeks later, when he seemed physically no worse, rising very early in the morning he walked from end to end of the huge camp (in which dwelt some 17,000 people) bidding farewell to all he met and blessing them. He then walked about five miles (8 km.) to Jericho, where he had relatives, and repeated his action. Returning to his tent at the camp, where his father sat cross-legged upon the ground, he kissed him and invoked the blessing of Allah upon him; he then lay down with his head in his father's lap and died instantly. Later the boy came to be revered as something of a saint or *walee*.

I hope the Gradgrinds will not try to rationalize these things. Let us recognize that there are still imponderables behind both the jargon and the stupendous achievements of present-day medicine.

SIR,—As a doctor's wife I am a regular reader of the *Journal*, and was very impressed by Dr ——'s letter on premonition of death because a similar thing happened to my own mother. She was dying of bronchitis and summoned the family round her because she would die that night. I did my best to dispel this idea and said I would see her the next morning. She replied, 'You won't. I shall die soon after midnight to-night.' She was perfectly lucid, said good-bye to all of us, and asked numerous questions regarding outstanding matters. She died at 12.40 a.m. that night. It is conceivable that one might know one was going to die, but how do such people know when?

## THE PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

THIS new society was founded in June 1957, at Duke University by a group of professional and lay researchers attending a parapsychological workshop. The Association is planned to serve as a common meeting ground for all those actively engaged in psychical research. Its membership is restricted to those who are or have been active in research and it is hoped it will become a scientific association of standing and authority comparable with similar associations in other fields of science and technology.

Its objects, as defined in its constitution are:

1. The objects shall be to advance parapsychology as a science, to disseminate knowledge of the field, and to integrate the findings with those of other branches of science.
2. In conformity with its objects, the Association will collaborate with existing psychical research societies which serve the interests of a mixed professional and lay membership.



Thus it will probably take on a different characteristic from the existing societies and should complement and help to advance their work.

The First Annual Convention of the Association was held at the College of the City of New York from 4-6 September 1958. Among papers read and discussed were those presented by the President, Dr McConnell, J. G. Pratt, Carroll Nash and G. H. Estabrooks. Dr Gardner Murphy in an opening address urged the Association to show 'more self-criticism, sophistication, culture-mindedness and psychology mindedness'. He criticized the 'dearth of big ideas, new perspectives and research creativeness'. He spoke in detail about the need for researchers to utilize current findings in the field of psychology. He suggested that the family and cultural background of subjects and experimenters might yield valuable information and that, generally, the complex interaction of bio-chemical and cultural factors be considered closely by the new generation of workers.

## THE LIBRARY

### THE NEW ARRANGEMENT

THE books are now divided into about 20 sections according to subject. Each section has been allocated a letter of the alphabet and a colour. All the books in a given section have a disk of the appropriate colour on the spine, bearing its index letters. These usually consist of the letter of its section, followed by the first three letters of the author's name. In the case of the rare books' section, which consists of books confined to the library dating from 1500 onwards, the disk letters consist of the letter of the section followed by the date of publication of the book.

The sections are arranged on the shelves one after the other in the order of their reference letters. Thus Section 'A' comes first followed by 'B', 'C', etc. Each section is in alphabetical order according to authors.

Two indexes have been made, one according to authors and one according to titles. Each card in the index bears a coloured disk which is the identical with one on the spine of the book.

The new index cabinets contain gravity clutch rods in the drawers to prevent removal and disarrangement of cards. The drawers have plate-glass tops on which notes can be written.

When a book is borrowed from the library it should be noted in the Withdrawals Register which will be kept open on the library table. When books have not been returned within one month of

the date of borrowing, a reminder will be sent out. Returned books should be placed in the special trough provided.

A coloured plan of the library is in preparation, and will be on display shortly.

#### LATEST ADDITIONS

*Four Modern Ghosts* by E. J. Dingwall and T. H. Hall

*So Great a Mystery* by Kenneth Walker

*Fatima in the Light of History* by Costa Brochado (Translated and edited by George C. A. Boehrer)

*Fatima, the Facts* by Father John de Marchi

*E.S.P.* by McLellan

*E.S.P. and Personality Patterns* by R. A. McConnell and G. Schmeidler

#### NOTICES

PART 187 of *Proceedings* was published in October, 1958. Its contents are: *F. W. H. Myers's Posthumous Message* by W. H. Salter and *A Cosmological Approach to a Theory of Mental Images* by C. C. L. Gregory and Anita Kohsen. Copies may be obtained from the Secretary price 5s. 2d. post free. (Members 2s. 8d.)

A NEW book by C. C. L. Gregory and Anita Kohsen entitled *The O-Structure, an Introduction to Psychophysical Cosmology* is being published by The Institute for the Study of Mental Images (I.S.M.I.), Gally Hill, Church Crookham, Hants. from whom copies can be obtained price £1 1s. od.

WE regret that the initials of Mr P. J. M. McEwan, the psychologist, are given incorrectly on p. 275 of the September *Journal*.

THE American Society for Psychical Research has announced an essay contest on paranormal mental phenomena and their relationship to the problem of survival of the human personality after death. The competition is held in honour of William James; it offers prizes of \$300, \$200 and \$100.

The contest closes July 1959. Authors may present an original idea, supported by research and interpretation of the data; they may concern themselves with criticism of interpretation of recent research reports, or they may attempt to state problems and methods concerning future research which could throw light on

the areas of psychical research from which the claims for evidence on survival originate. Entrants, however, are free to select their own subject within the area of mental phenomena. The award of a prize is not contingent upon whether the essayist argues for or against survival.

Essays submitted should not exceed ten thousand words in length. Entrants should not identify themselves on the manuscript, but must use a pseudonym and attach their actual name and address in a separate, sealed envelope. Manuscripts should be submitted in triplicate, typed double spaced and on one side of the paper, to Mrs L. A. Dale, American Society for Psychical Research, 880 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N.Y. Essays will be coded and then forwarded to the judges, so that anonymity is assured. The panel of judges is composed of the following : Mrs E. W. Allison, Mr J. Fraser Nicol and Dr Karlis Osis.

MISS CELIA GREEN, Secretary (Research), has been elected to the Perrott Studentship in Psychical Research administered by Trinity College, Cambridge. While continuing to work part-time at the Society, she is planning to read for an Oxford Doctorate of Philosophy in Psychical Research.

PROFESSOR C. D. BROAD will be giving a series of Perrott Lectures on six Thursdays beginning 22 January 1959 in the Mill Lane Lecture Rooms, Cambridge, at 5 p.m. The lectures will be on the general subject of psychical research, and will be open to all who are interested.



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
BY ROBERT MACLEHOSE AND CO. LTD  
THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, GLASGOW







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1957-8

For the sake of brevity such qualifications as 'supposed', 'alleged', etc., are omitted from this index. It must, however, be understood that this omission is made solely for brevity, and does not imply any assertion that the subject-matter of any entry is in fact real or genuine.

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